

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY EUR/EE:IMSILINS:LM
APPROVED BY EUR - J. A. ARMITAGE
S/S - MR. SEBASTIAN

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
INFO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 282448

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CVIS, EEWT, RO

SUBJECT: JEWISH EMIGRATION FROM ROMANIA

REF: BUCHAREST 6711

1. DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY ARMITAGE MET NOVEMBER 15 WITH ISRAELI COUNSELOR PEDAHZUR TO DISCUSS RECENT DOWNTURN IN ROMANIAN EMIGRATION FIGURES. ARMITAGE EXPRESSED OUR CONCERN AT DOWNWARD TREND AND SAID WE WANTED TO KNOW ISRAELI REACTION. IF WE WERE TO MAKE REPRESENTATIONS TO THE GOR, WE WOULD WANT TO DO SO IN CONJUNCTION WITH ISRAEL, SO WE WANTED TO BE SURE THAT THE GOI IS ALSO CONCERNED ABOUT THE DROP. WE HAD REACHED POINT WHERE OUR GENERAL REPRESENTATIONS TO GOR TENDED TO FOUNDER ON GOR RETORT THAT NUMBERS OF JEWS WISHING TO EMIGRATE IS FALLING FOLLOWING YEARS IN WHICH TOTAL EMIGRATION HAD REACHED 300 THOUSAND PLUS. WE NEED TO BE IN A POSITION TO BE MORE SPECIFIC IN OUR DISCUSSIONS. TO THAT END, HE ASKED PEDAHZUR TO OBTAIN FROM TEL AVIV BEST ISRAELI ESTIMATES OF (A) THE NUMBER OF ROMANIAN JEWS WISHING TO EMIGRATE IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE, CONFIDENTIAL

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AND (B) OVERALL NUMBER OF THOSE WHO EVENTUALLY WISH TO

EMIGRATE. ARMITAGE MADE CLEAR THAT WE WOULD WISH TO USE THESE FIGURES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH GOR, BUT THE QUESTION OF ATTRIBUTION COULD BE WORKED OUT.

2. PEDAHZUR'S INITIAL REACTION IMPLIED THAT THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT MIGHT BE RELUCTANT TO MAKE OFFICIAL REPRESENTATIONS TO THE GOR ON JEWISH EMIGRATION AT THIS TIME. HE REMARKED THAT "WE HAVE OTHER PROBLEMS WITH THE ROMANIANS." HE ALSO NOTED THAT NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE ROMANIANS "IN THE OTHER CHANNEL" MIGHT TAKE PLACE IN THE NEXT TWO OR THREE WEEKS (HE INTIMATED EXPECTED EMIGRATION LEVELS HAD NOT YET BEEN SET BY THE ISRAELI SIDE). PEDAHZUR DID SAY THAT OF COURSE THE GOI IS "CONCERNED" ABOUT THE RECENT EMIGRATION FIGURES AND NOTED JEWISH LEADERS SUCH AS RABBI SCHINDLER HAVE MADE CLEAR THAT THERE ARE MORE JEWS WISHING TO EMIGRATE THAN ARE BEING PERMITTED TO DO SO. HE USED THE FIGURE OF 20-25,000, ATTRIBUTED TO THE FEDERATION OF ROMANIAN JEWS IN ISRAEL, AS REPRESENTING THE NUMBER OF THOSE WHO WOULD WISH TO LEAVE ROMANIA AT SOME POINT BUT DID NOT MAKE THAT AN AUTHORITATIVE FIGURE.

3. PEDAHZUR ASKED WHETHER OUR INTEREST IN OBTAINING NUMERICAL ESTIMATES FROM THE GOI REPRESENTS A CHANGE IN OUR POLICY NOT TO "PLAY THE NUMBERS GAME." ARMITAGE RESPONDED THAT THERE WAS NO CHANGE. WE HAVE NO INTENTION OF ATTEMPTING TO PRESCRIBE TO THE GOR MONTHLY TOTALS, BUT WE DO NEED A FIRMER BASIS FOR QUESTIONING THE ROMANIAN PERFORMANCE. AT PRESENT, WE LACK EFFECTIVE MEANS TO RESPOND TO THE ROMANIAN ARGUMENT THAT THE NUMBER OF JEWS WISHING TO EMIGRATE HAS DWINDLED TO THE LEVEL REFLECTED IN RECENT EMIGRATION STATISTICS.

4. PEDAHZUR SAID HE WOULD CONVEY ARMITAGE'S REQUEST TO TEL AVIV. KISSINGER

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